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Leaving a Monumental Legacy

By Mike Pence

[Muncie Star Press](#) , [Richmond Pal-Item](#) , and [Evansville Courier Press](#)

Today, across our state and nation, we remember the legacy of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and honor him with a national day of service. Although this is a day our national leaders have chosen for us to remember his legacy, our country would do well to remember his lesson of equality more often.

Dr. King's lifetime of work and achievements are well known. From walking the dirt roads of the deep South to speaking to hundreds of thousands on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, he touched the hearts of Americans and further instilled the concepts of civil rights, freedom and equality into our nation's consciousness. What began as a movement became a way of life.

His views were based on faith and principle. His courageous actions drastically altered life in our country. I pray they live on in the hearts of every American.

I was reminded of this as I walked the streets of Selma, Alabama, a few years ago with civil rights activist and fellow Congressman John Lewis of Georgia. Our family's visit to Selma to commemorate the famous civil rights march formed an indelible impression on our hearts.

Congressman Lewis recounted the beatings he received from police during "Bloody Sunday" as he marched next to Dr. King across Selma's Edmund Pettus Bridge. As we walked arm-in-arm across that very same bridge, we gained an even greater appreciation for Dr. King and his legacy.

This legacy has come full circle. Recently, I had the opportunity to visit the new memorial honoring Dr. King in Washington, D.C. Standing in the shadow of his likeness, I was reminded

of the profound importance and impact of his life.

The memorial stands tall and is composed of several large boulders. The center section, from which Dr. King is sculpted, extends prominently forward into a plaza facing the Tidal Basin. Engraved on that center section are his words, "Out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope."

Dr. King fought against despair, injustice, inequality and prejudice. He brought hope to millions and the opportunity for a better life. For that, more than forty years after his death, Dr. King has rightfully been honored with a memorial in our nation's capital.

But the real memorial to Dr. King will never be finished, for it resides in the hearts of every American who strives for a more perfect union. To commemorate this day, let us all rededicate ourselves to that cause which Dr. King so selflessly advanced, "that all men are created equal." The devotion to equality that resides in the hearts of every American is the true legacy and most lasting memorial to the life and work of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.